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CONTINUING "THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER"

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EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

Detroit as an Example of Scientific School Organization

A year ago Mr. S. A. Courtis was appointed on recommendation of Superintendent Chadsey to act as efficiency agent in the Detroit schools. This move put Detroit in line with the leading school systems of the country in its emphasis on scientific methods of school management. Mr. Courtis is known to the educational profession as a man of unbounded energy and industry and of achievements in scientific school work which command universal respect. He began a year ago to test and chart the Detroit schools. He used for this purpose the very efficient instrument which he had privately evolved, namely, his widely and very favorably known tests. This vigorous injection of scientific methods into the Detroit school system caused anxiety in several quarters. There are even in these days teachers and principals who prefer the old methods of school inspection which made it less difficult to evade and escape. But Mr. Courtis went his way as an efficiency agent should. He turned on the light where there had been darkness, and he helped those who know how to profit by scientific methods. What is the result? The vigorous schoolman can guess. He was attacked. It was found that he had wasted stationery, so the enemy said. He doubtless must be grafting, because he had the arithmetic material ready before he was employed by the city. He didn't attend to his job.

So the Detroit papers were full of charges and threats and deep rumblings of a coming fall. The fall, however, was, on mature consideration, at least postponed.

It would be easy to sink to the level of those who attacked Mr. Courtis and reply in personal comments. But such is not the purpose of this note. The issue is much broader and larger than the mere question of the integrity and intelligence of the Detroit Board of Education. The country at large is vitally interested in this broad issue. Scientific methods of supervision mean a new attitude on the part of school officials. There will be a transition period when the unscientific will be suspicious. This transition period will be filled with the clamoring of those who realize that scientific methods are the foes of lethargy and incompetency. But the outcome of this movement is even now clear. The Detroit school system will be dominated from this time on by scientific methods. It makes very little difference to education in general whether the domination by scientific methods is accomplished in one way or the other. It will come because there is no other method of conducting a really modern school system.

The following item, quoted from the Detroit Free Press, gives an account of the matter which speaks for itself:

Fires that have been smouldering for a year under the seat occupied by Professor Stuart A. Courtis, efficiency expert of the public schools, burst into flames Thursday at the regular meeting of the Board of Education.

For a time they threatened to burn up Professor Courtis' position and badly scar several members of the board. President McMichael, in imitation of some of the younger generation over whose studies he holds sway, threatened to pick up his toys and go home, and this finally ended the flare-up.

It started when the textbook committee, in a majority report signed by Inspectors Neinas, Reinhold, and Sherman, recommended that the bids submitted by Professor Courtis for printing material for his efficiency work be rejected and his system of arithmetic tests be discontinued. Inspectors Harms and Condon, in a minority report, wanted the professor's recommendations adopted.

Inspectors Neinas and Reinhold charged Courtis with padding the printing specifications and also with tricking the committee by submitting bids for the printing before the "copy" for it was ready.

The board then voted on the divided report and twelve inspectors had voted to throw out the Courtis system when Inspectors Mumford and Komrof-

sky rose and declared the board did not know what it was doing. Mumford charged the opponents of Courtis with trying to "put something across."

Inspector Hely then jumped into the ring and attempted to settle the matter by a motion that the matter be referred back to the committee. This was followed by an amendment by Inspector Mumford, giving the committee power to award the printing contracts and providing for the immediate installation of the Courtis system. It carried.

In the wrangling that preceded the final action, which members of the board say is likely to be only temporary, Superintendent Chadsey was called upon to defend Professor Courtis. This he did at length, characterizing the professor as a splendid educator.

Inspector Reinhold wanted to know what had been done with $2,000 that was appropriated for the professor's experiments and research work. Inspector Neinas wanted to know why Professor Courtis had his offices in the Normal School instead of at the board rooms where he could be watched. He also charged the teacher with having had only two years in college.

Other inspectors charged that there was waste in Professor Courtis' department, as his statistical cards had been found in a janitor's ash can and some of his electrical apparatus was lying unkept on the floor of a room in the Normal School.

New York School Budget

The school budget of the largest school system in the United States is always an impressive example of the importance of public education in American cities. The Board of Education of New York City has prepared a budget for 1916 aggregating $43,894,524. This is more than $4,000,000 above the figures of last year. The comptroller of the city has felt himself moved to criticize the management of schools and to indicate certain economies which he thinks should be effected. He would reduce the number of teachers by 10 per cent, reduce salaries, eliminate extra pay for services rendered by persons employed on annual salaries, and cut down the elementary school to seven grades. The attitude of the Board of Education is reflected in the following item clipped from the *New York Globe:*

Action was deferred by the Board of Education yesterday upon the school budget estimate for 1916 to give the members time to study it before it is finally adopted for presentation to the Board of Estimate. Chairman Greene of the finance committee, in presenting the estimate, explained briefly the increases included and the reasons therefor.

An attempt was made to have the committee empowered to give further consideration to the recommendations of the inspector of ungraded classes for visiting teachers. The resolution was defeated.

In the effort to keep the budget down to the lowest possible sum, the committees of the board generally have refused to sanction any new activities or extensions of old. Practically the entire increase is due to the increase in school registration.

Provision has not been made for any more kindergarten teachers or for additional teachers of modern languages in the elementary schools. The requests of the inspector of ungraded classes were limited to two assistant inspectors, two physicians, and thirty teachers. Additional visiting teachers have been eliminated. It was also decided not to include a request for evening sessions at the High School of Commerce, for summer sessions of high schools, or for additional teachers of English in high schools. Other sweeping curtailments were made in high schools. The new salary schedule for attendance officers also was eliminated. No increase will be requested for after-school athletic centers.

Seven-Year School Not an Economy

The suggestion made by Comptroller Prendergast that the elementary course be reduced to seven years deserves more than mere mention. There can be very little doubt that this particular suggestion will be more and more commonly made in the coming years. The eighth grade is not especially useful as it is now conducted and should be reorganized. On the other hand, Mr. Prendergast is in error in assuming that this move will make for a reduction in the cost of schools. An elimination of the eighth grade means the development of junior high schools and more students in these upper schools.

The Gary Plan as a Plan for Expanded Schools

In this connection it is illuminating to follow the development of Superintendent Wirt's work in New York City. There can be very little doubt that one of the strong motives which impelled Mayor Mitchel and the other city officials when they brought Superintendent Wirt to New York was the hope that sweeping economies might be made possible in the school budget. The rumor had reached New York, as it has every city, that at Gary twice or three times as many children can be put into a school as is now commonly done. Longer days can be provided at less money in the belief of some school boards. It is, therefore, most encouraging to find in Superintendent Wirt's report to the board the following statement:

I wish to state very clearly in closing that I am not specially interested in running school systems cheaply. My desire is to procure greater opportunities

for children. As to the disposition of the economies that may be secured through a work-study-and-play school organization, I do not wish to advise, but I hope that as far as possible such economies will result in better school facilities for the children. New York City at present is not spending a greater proportionate amount of its budget for public education than the average city.

So significant is the question of economy in an interpretation of the so-called Gary system that a further quotation from Superintendent Wirt's New York report may be given in full.

The Plan as a Whole Not Cheap

I have made a survey of New York City schools accommodating approximately two hundred and fifty thousand children. I believe that an extension of the work-study-and-play school program to all schools of the city will make it possible to provide a six-hour school day in place of five, and additional facilities for play, auditorium, and shopwork, and at the same time reduce the number of teachers employed 10 per cent. This does not necessarily mean that the budget for teachers' salaries may be decreased 10 per cent. Additional teachers must be provided for the increase of register, and additional moneys must be provided for the annual increase in the salaries of the teachers now employed. Also it would be possible to employ the same number of teachers that would be employed under your traditional system of reorganization, by reducing the size of classes, which would, no doubt, increase the efficiency of the work in the schools. It would also be possible to use the economy in the teaching funds for more extensive education and wider use in the plants.

To complete the reorganization of all the schools in New York City for work-study-and-play schools, approximately $2.50 per pupil would have to be provided for structural changes and additional equipment, which would require the provision of $2,000,000 in the budget of 1916. Approximately an additional $2,000,000 would be required for play space and $2,000,000 more for annexes to the present schools. The reorganization of all schools would release approximately one-fourth of the present school plants, the value of which can be turned back to the Sinking Fund Commission for sale or other use. There would also be a saving of overhead charges for operation and maintenance of these abandoned schools.

By an expenditure of $2,000,000 for structural changes and equipment and $4,000,000 for land, I believe that all of the children in New York City can be given a six-hour school day with the superior facilities of the work-study-and-play school program.

To determine the relative economy of the work-study-and-play school program compared with the traditional school, it would be necessary to estimate the cost of providing for all the children the regular five-hour single system school, the cost of operating and maintaining the great number of additional school plants, and the relative opportunities of children in the two types of schools.

This statement puts the case so clearly and pointedly that it should be read wherever the Gary system has been misunderstood. School buildings must be of the modern type to accommodate the elaborate program proposed by Superintendent Wirt. If a city has old schools, they must be reconstructed. Furthermore, in recommending the abandoning of certain school sites, Superintendent Wirt recommends a move that is most rational, but in no wise a unique economy.

The real point of the matter is that readjustments result in better schools, not cheaper schools. The equilibrium is thus restored. Gary has been thought of as a home of cheap schools. This is a radical misunderstanding. The Gary plan is not a cheap plan. It is an elaborate plan, calling for much readjustment in buildings, in programs, and in the equipment of teachers. For an enlargement of school plans there will be unbounded enthusiasm; there has been skepticism about plans for a cheap system.

Corporation Schools

The *Pittsburgh Gazette* in a recent article discusses the convention which is to be held in that city in 1916 from May 30 to June 2 by representatives of seventy corporation schools. These corporation schools are conducted by various business organizations for the better training of employees. Three years ago the first convention of the National Association of Corporation Schools of America was held in Dayton, Ohio, in connection with the National Cash Register works. A second convention was held in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a third in Buffalo, New York, this past summer. The purposes of these schools and the outline of the program of the coming meeting are presented in the following statements taken from the *Pittsburgh Gazette:*

> Every phase of the industrial school training for corporations is to be taken up and especially the importance of establishing a relationship with general public educational systems. As explained by the president of the organization, at this time the corporation schools for apprentices and tradesmen are based, first, necessarily on primary education of the apprentice who leaves school very young, then gradually working him into a trade best suited to him in the plants of the corporation. It is the ultimate hope that every boy will be compelled to attend public or high school until he is aged 16, and then the corporation

schools will fall to their natural task of adjusting the boy's school education to the trade or calling that he is best suited for in its mills.

The corporation schools, too, are designed to check or eliminate lost motion in the development of new workmen in the mills along skilled lines, by studying the young boy when he first enters its employ. It has been common to try a boy out in some one department. If he fails to make good he is dismissed and another is tried. It is believed now that a boy may be a failure in one department of the huge mill, but would be a prize winner in another, and the dismissing of a trial applicant for another is a serious loss of motion that could be saved by having a guiding mind watching the applicant and studying what he is best suited for.

This is the chief development of the corporation schools of the past few years. It is also seeking to broaden out the salesman and the men of the more technical fields. In other words it is beginning to be realized that to properly fit a man to be of the greatest value to himself and his employing company he must be educated by that company and built up to the highest standards of preparedness for growth and development of the trade.

But besides these more or less technical subjects of the coming convention there is a series of other topics such as safety and health; allied institutions, employment plans, vocational guidance, retail salesmanship, and subjects that would fit into the whole scheme of educational work for the apprentices.

The idea for corporation schools for developing the best in the young employees is comparatively new, but it has had extensive study, and experience has come rapidly and simultaneously all over the country. It was discovered in the study of these facts that this corporation school idea sprang up in a dozen localities almost at the same time. It was only when the association was proposed that each became aware that others were doing the same work. Then began the general association organization to secure mutual benefits of conference in continuing the work.

Methods of Interesting Communities in Schools

The Department of Public Instruction of the state of New Jersey has taken two steps which ought to be productive during the coming year of a closer relationship between the community and the school. Commissioner Kendall sent to the clergy and the people of the state of New Jersey a document recommending that Sunday, September 12, be observed as Educational Sunday throughout the state. This document makes a strong appeal for a public recognition of the importance of the schools and of their work. At the same time the commissioner addressed a circular letter to the county superintendents and supervising principals of the schools emphasizing the

importance of their taking the initiative in securing the co-operation of parents. The following paragraphs, quoted from the two documents above described, gives some notion of the character of the movement which the department has elaborated:

I therefore earnestly recommend that Sunday, September 12, be observed as Educational Sunday, and cordially invite the clergy to unite with their congregations in services appropriate to the greatness of the cause. On such an occasion the worth of education might be set forth, the need of co-operation of home, school, and church emphasized, and the attention of parents called to their own responsibility. Much as the schools are doing and much more as they might do to build up strong, robust character, the responsibility of parents in the training of their own children should be emphasized. The home is a more fundamental institution than the school, great as the school is.

No school system will succeed without the hearty co-operation of the fathers and mothers of the children. This co-operation often is not secured because no opportunity is given the patrons to participate. Parents should be interested in nothing so much as in the education of their children and they will not withhold even the best things from them once they are persuaded that these things make for their welfare. It is hoped, therefore, that superintendents and principals will encourage the formation of parent-teachers' associations or similar organizations in every school district. In districts where this is not feasible parents should be called together, at least occasionally, through the school year in order that the aims and purposes of the school may be explained to them. Conferences between parents and teachers should be encouraged and supervisors should make it possible for each teacher to know the parents of her pupils. It is unreasonable to expect the best results when parents and teachers do not know and therefore often do not understand each other.

Questions for Self-Examination

The Department of Educational Investigation and Measurement of the Boston public schools has issued a four-page leaflet suggesting questions which teachers should ask themselves for purposes of self-examination. It is not intended that these questions shall in any wise be reported to the central office, but each teacher is asked to go over the whole list for the purpose of stimulating himself or herself to improve in the classroom work. It is not possible to quote the four pages of questions. Some samples, however, may be given. The following, taken from the various sections, indicate the scope of the whole series:

I. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

2. Am I careful to keep myself in as good physical health as possible?
5. Is my voice well modulated?
7. How do I know that my use of English is worthy of the mother tongue?

II. ABILITY AS A TEACHER

1. *Management of the room.*—
   1. Is the ventilation in my room as good as I can make it?
   2. Is the temperature satisfactory?
   3. Are the seats properly adjusted to the pupils?
2. *Management of the class—discipline.*—
   3. What evidences are there that my pupils are acquiring habits of good physical bearing?
   4. Do I find more difficulty in handling the class at dismissals than during recitation periods?
3. *Teaching the lesson.*—
   2. What method of teaching do I use most often:
      a) The conversational, in which the pupils both answer and ask questions?
      b) The quiz, in which the pupils only answer the questions which I ask them?
      c) The lecture, in which the pupils merely receive what is given them?
   6. To what extent in each lesson do I help the pupils to prepare the next lesson:
      a) By a good ending of recitation?
      b) By a judicious assignment?
      c) By stating the aim?
      d) By anticipating their difficulties?
      e) By suggestions or directions?
   11. Are my questions simple, direct, and logical, or are they rambling, ambiguous, and suggestive of the answer?
   13. What means do I adopt to insure a judicious distribution of my questions among the pupils?
   14. How many different pupils of my class do I give a chance to recite in each recitation? In a week?

Junior High School

This *Journal* has aimed to keep its readers informed with regard to the progress of the movement for junior high schools. Superintendents and principals are constantly asking for programs showing the course of study and the arrangement of work in such institutions. The *Journal* will be glad to print such programs in full so far as space can be provided for these. The following is an example of a course

of study which has introduced radical modifications in the eighth grade and even in the seventh grade.

COURSE OF STUDY FOR THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ADRIAN, MICHIGAN

Seventh Grade	Recitations per Week	Credits per Year	Eighth Grade	Recitations per Week	Credits per Year	Ninth Grade	Recitations per Week	Credits per Year
READING AND SPELLING	5	10	READING AND SPELLING	5	10	ENGLISH	5	10
ARITHMETIC	5	10	ARITHMETIC	5	10	CITIZENSHIP	5	10
GEOGRAPHY	3	6	HISTORY	5	10	Commercial Arithmetic	5	10
DOMESTIC SCIENCE	2	2	Domestic Science	5	10	Domestic Science	5	10
MANUAL TRAINING	2	2	Manual Training	5	10	Manual Training	5	10
GRAMMAR	4	8	Grammar	5	10			
PHYSIOLOGY	1	2	Physiology	5	10	General Science	5	10
DRAWING	2	2	Drawing	2	2	Mechanical Drawing	5	10
Music	2	2	Music	2	2	Music	2	2
Physical Training			Latin	5	10	Latin	5	10
			German	5	10	German	5	10
			Physical Training			Physical Training		

One hundred and twenty credits are necessary to complete the junior high school. All subjects in capitals and small capitals are required of every pupil. Those in small letters are elective. No pupil may carry more than forty-two credits work without special permission. Such permission will be granted only to those pupils whose excellence in scholarship has been assured by their previous work. Elective subjects should be chosen with great care. Each pupil must confine his work to the grade to which he belongs. A discussion follows which, it is hoped, will assist parents and pupils in making elections.

Music in each year will consist, mainly, of chorus work which will include enough of theory to enable those taking it to read music.

Pupils electing Latin or German in the eighth year will receive instruction in grammar in connection with those subjects. It will be well for pupils who expect to go to college to begin one of the languages and continue it through their high-school course.

Domestic science and manual training afford the most practical training of any subject in the entire course. The pupil who pursues this work through the junior high school will receive a training that will serve him well throughout life.

Physiology in the eighth grade is recommended to pupils who do not care for the languages.

The general science in the ninth grade is a practical course including work in each of the natural sciences and, in addition to the valuable information and training afforded, will enable one to choose intelligently the work he wishes to continue farther in the sciences.

Commercial arithmetic should be taken by all who expect to take bookkeeping in the senior high school.

Mechanical drawing is intended for all boys who expect to do mechanical or industrial work.